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Chinese Medicine and Healing: An Illustrated History

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Chinese Medicine and Healing is a comprehensive introduction to a rich array of Chinese healing practices as they have developed through time and across cultures. Contributions from fifty-eight leading international scholars in such fields as Chinese archaeology, history, anthropology, religion, and medicine make this a collaborative work of uncommon intellectual synergy, and a vital new resource for anyone working in East Asian or world history, in medical history and anthropology, and in biomedicine and complementary healing arts.

This illustrated history explores the emergence and development of a wide range of health interventions, including propitiation of disease-inflicting spirits, divination, vitality-cultivating meditative disciplines, herbal remedies, pulse diagnosis, and acupuncture. The authors investigate processes that contribute to historical change, such as competition between different types of practitioner?shamans, Daoist priests, Buddhist monks, scholar physicians, and even government officials. Accompanying vignettes and illustrations bring to life such diverse arenas of health care as childbirth in the Tang period, Yuan state-established medical schools, fertility control in the Qing, and the search for sexual potency in the People’s Republic.

The two final chapters illustrate Chinese healing modalities across the globe and address the challenges they have posed as alternatives to biomedical standards of training and licensure. The discussion includes such far-reaching examples as Chinese treatments for diphtheria in colonial Australia and malaria in Africa, the invention of ear acupuncture by the French and its worldwide dissemination, and the varying applications of acupuncture from Germany to Argentina and Iraq.

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